

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 12 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 14 through 25 as follows:

1-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the difference between the pKa of the organic acid groups or the salts of the organic acid groups contained in the copolymers of the first and second compositions is 0.3 or more, and a difference between a pH of the first and second liquid compositions is 0.3 or more.

15. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the difference between the pKa of the organic acid groups or the salts of the organic acid groups contained in the copolymers is at least two.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the pKa of the sulfonic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition is at least two.

17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the organic acid groups of the copolymer of the first liquid composition are selected from benzoic acid

groups, aliphatic dicarboxylic acid groups, aromatic dicarboxylic acid groups, halogen-substituted benzoic acid groups, and sulfonic acid groups.

18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the amphiphilic block copolymer has an alkenyl ether as a repeating monomer unit.

19. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the functional substance is enclosed by the amphiphilic block copolymer.

20. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the functional substance is a colorant.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for liquid application, said apparatus comprising:

liquid applying means for applying the liquid by the method of claim ~~12~~ 24;

and

driving means for driving the liquid applying means.

22. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the pKa of the sulfonic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition is not higher than zero.

23. (Currently Amended) The method of applying a liquid according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the organic acid of the first liquid composition is any one selected from the group consisting of benzoic acid, halogen-substituted benzoic acids, and sulfonic acids.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of applying a liquid according to claim 12, A~~
method of applying to a recording medium a liquid consisting of a first liquid composition and a
second liquid composition, each of the liquid compositions comprising:

a functional substance;

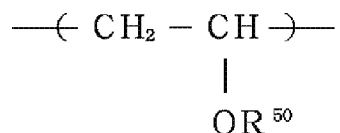
an amphiphilic block copolymer; and

a liquid medium, with a pH and a pKa of an organic acid group or a salt of the
organic acid group of the copolymer of the first liquid composition being different than a pH and
a pKa of an organic acid group or a salt of the organic acid group of the copolymer of the second
liquid composition,

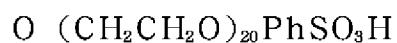
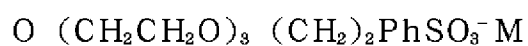
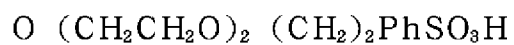
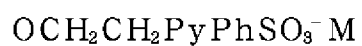
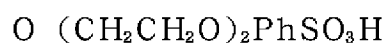
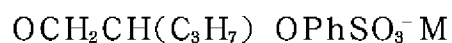
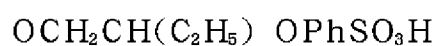
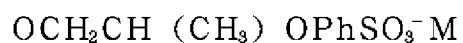
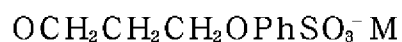
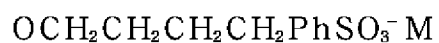
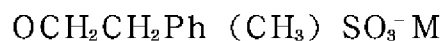
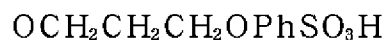
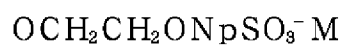
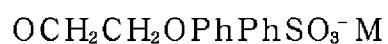
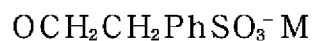
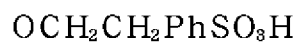
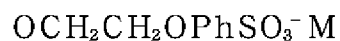
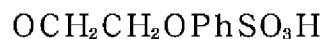
wherein (i) the first liquid composition is greater than the second liquid
composition in pH of the liquid compositions, (ii) the first liquid composition is greater than the
second liquid composition in pKa of the organic acid group or the salt of the organic acid group
of the copolymers, (iii) the organic acid of the copolymer of the second liquid composition is a
sulfonic acid, and (iv) an increase in viscosity of the first liquid composition is caused by a
decrease in pH of the first liquid composition on contact with the second liquid composition, and

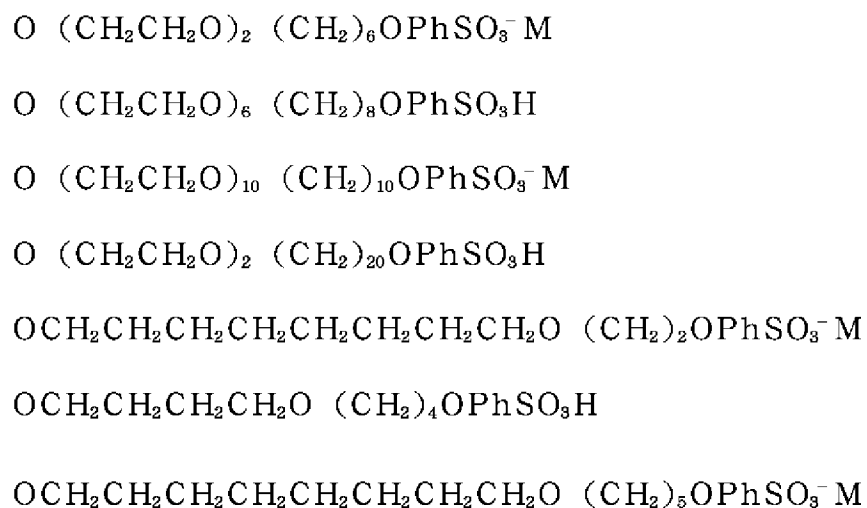
wherein the copolymer of the second liquid composition has a repeating unit
structure represented by the following formula:

General formula (5)



where in OR⁵⁰ is represented by any formula selected from the group consisting of the following:





wherein M represents a monovalent or multivalent cation, Ph represents 1,4-phenylene or 1,3-phenylene, Py represents 2,5-pyrimidyl, and Np represents 2,6-naphthylene, 1,4-naphthylene, or 1,5-naphthylene.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of applying a liquid according to claim ~~12~~ 24, wherein the copolymer of the second liquid composition is a diblock polymer constituted of (a) isobutyl vinyl ether and 2-vinyloxy-1-biphenyloxyethyl (A-block component), and (b) sodium 4-(2-vinyloxyethoxy)benzenesulfonate (B-block component).